

DRAFT Minutes of the Urchfont Parish Council (UPC) Meeting held on Wednesday 14th February 2018 in the Conference Room of Urchfont Village Hall (V1)

Present: Councillors: Mottram (DM – Chairman), Day (GD – Vice Chairman), Thomas (RT), Hill (TH), Kemp (MK), Hawkins (RH), Creasey (GC) and Cowen (LC)

Clerk to the Council: Lunn (BL)

Councillor for Urchfont & The Cannings: Whitehead (PW)

Members of the Public (for all or part of the meeting): Sandra Johnston (SJ) - UPC Planning Administrator), Phil Milanes, Brenda Potter, Peter Huntly, Nicky Hammond

1. **Welcome by the Chairman**
2. **Apologies:** Were accepted from Councillors Donald (BD), Mitchell (NM) and Stevens (DS).
3. **Declarations of Interest:** LC – Non pecuniary interest in Item 12. For future reference it was noted that RT has no residual interest in the Peppercombe Development having sold the land to the developer.
4. **Time set aside for Public Participation and External Reports** – See below under agenda items.
5. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 10th January 2018**

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To accept and sign the minutes unchanged as a true and accurate record of the meeting.	DM	TH	Unanimously Agreed

6. **Action List Status Review and Update Reports from the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2018** not covered as separate agenda items below – DM commented that all actions are in progress or being reported on later in the meeting. BL reported that DS had informed him that he will providing a written report to the March meeting on the bench repair in the Recreation Ground.

7. Finance

a. **Financial Statement and Bank Reconciliation as at 31st January 2018** – These statements had been circulated to councillors with the agenda and showed that the accounts are in good order. Due to a successful application for a refund from WC on Cemetery business rates, the indicated reserve at year end had increased to £13,588. Due to some recent questions from councillors, BL took the opportunity to clarify the information contained in these statements which are circulated monthly.

b. **Projects** – BL reported that all budgeted projects had now been completed except for five with a value of £2050 (Recreation Ground Bench, Website upgrade, Pedestrian Crossing signs, Welcome to Urchfont leaflet and Cricket Ground Pedestrian gate), time is now running out to complete and pay for these in year. Project owners were asked to progress these as soon as possible.

In terms of the Cricket Ground Gate, a quotation had been received for this project but this significantly exceeded the approved budget of £500. DM is now seeking additional quotes to meet UPC Financial Regulations and also exploring the possibility of utilising a redundant metal kissing gate at the entrance to the Playing Field. GC suggested approaching the Rights of Way Group who may be able to obtain materials. An additional redundant kissing gate was identified behind the playground hard standing, this used to be part of the permissive path to Oakfrith Wood.

ACTION: FC/10/18 – Designated Project Managers

c. **Cemetery Bench** – With thanks to Brenda Potter for identifying the issue to him, BL commented on the poor condition of the memorial bench in the cemetery which has broken slats. DM questioned whether UPC had a responsibility to repair and maintain memorial benches which had been donated; discussion concluded that in accepting the bench onto UPC property then probably the Council accepts future maintenance liability. GC

suggested that maybe gifts to the community should only be accepted in future if they are accompanied by an ongoing maintenance responsibility by the donors, DM agreed that this should be considered further in future.

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

Brenda Potter commented that she had raised the issue of this broken bench with a number of councillors over past months but that nothing had been done to resolve the issue. This bench is valued and used by many people visiting the cemetery.

Chairman reopened the Council Meeting

It was agreed that, as he is already addressing the Recreation Ground bench repair, Councillor Stevens should be asked to provide an estimate for the repair of this cemetery bench at the next meeting.

ACTION: FC/11/18 - DS

8. Lead Councillor, Working Groups, Clerk & other written Reports (See Appendix attached on website only)

a. Clerks Report – no clarification requested, any updates given under relevant agenda items.

b. Councillor Reports - no clarification requested, any updates given under relevant agenda items.

- i. Scout Hut - BD
- ii. PROW - BD
- iii. Drains and Gullies - TH
- iv. Urchfont Village Cricket Club - DM

9. Farmers Field

a. Report on meeting of Friends of Farmers Field on 10th February – LC reported that he and MK attended the Friends of Farmers Field (FoFF) working meeting and discussed UPC views about the way forward. FoFF were very positive on the whole issue and were keen to facilitate and encourage school and pre-school visits to the site. It was emphasised that input from other organisations in the community is intended to be limited to provision of advice and not be invasive. Access for dogs is still an issue to be resolved. LC paid tribute to Phil Milanese for all his hard work and involvement. We now need to set up the joint UPC / FoFF Working Group to manage the way forward on agreed works and funding arrangements. MK stressed the need for Farmers Field to be an end destination rather than anything else.

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

Phil Milanese confirmed that the School are very enthusiastic to visit, kids are the future. Dogs are still an issue to be resolved, some owners do not clear up after their dogs. He is investigating grants available for works, in particular those proposed for the scrape over which he is not entirely convinced of the benefits. There could be issues due to the position of clay some 8ft below the surface level, potential flooding could be an issue.

Chairman re-opened the Council meeting.

RT commented that the working depth of a wildlife pond is around 3ft, with planting around the edges as a barrier and safety measure.

b. Creation of joint UPC / FoFF working group to determine the way forward – LC and MK indicated that they are prepared to be on the joint working group. It was suggested that Phil Milanese, Martijn Antheunise and Martin Bodman should be involved as well as others. DM tasked LC and MK with producing terms of reference for the working group to be presented at the March meeting for approval, these to include timescales. BL reminded all concerned that there can be no spending on this project without prior approval of the Council. RH asked about the need for public consultation, without public support to improve Farmers Field and encourage use the project is likely to fail. DM suggested that a presentation could be made at the Parish Meeting on 13th April and then followed up at on-site gatherings.

ACTION: FC/12/18 – LC/MK

10. Maintenance Contract and Bin Emptying ITTs

a. Progress report and to seek delegation to Finance Group to award contract based on evaluation – BL confirmed that ITT's had been sent to six contractors on or after the 20th January publication date, four contractors had requested and received site visits and tenders had been received from one contractor to date. Tender submission deadline is 17th February with the contract being awarded on 3rd March following evaluation and with a contract start date of 1st April 2018 for five years duration. Noting that the evaluation and contract award dates are before the March Council meeting, DM proposed that the tenders will be evaluated by the Finance Group (DM, BL, BD) and, assuming that the overall value for the two contracts is £15k or less per year, presented to the Vice Chairman on behalf of the Council for contract approval. If the value exceeds this amount then a special meeting of the Council will need to be called.

Proposal	Proposer	Secunder	Resolution
To approve the contract award process as above within an overall budget of £15k for the two contracts. Decision to be ratified by Full Council at April meeting.	GD	TH	Unanimously agreed

b. Update from WC on proposed quid pro quo arrangement for the transfer of responsibilities for grass cutting and litter bin emptying to UPC – In recognition of the transfer of grass cutting and litter bin emptying from WC to UPC from 1st April 2018, PW confirmed that an agreement is being drafted by WC Legal Department on the basis that if the School closes (and subject to current legislation and approval by Secretary of State for Education) then UPC will be given first option to take ownership of the whole of the Playing Field from WC. PW confirmed that the intention is to get this document agreed and signed prior to the 1st April 2018. GD stated that, while he liked the general thrust of the drafting, he would like to see an accompanying statement that WC will not pursue any other outcome with any other party for the playing field than that covered in this proposal.

11. Blocked drains & gullies – TH reported the fact that some confusion appears to exist over the clearing of reported blocked drains using the 'Wiltshire App'. He had received a response stating that there was not an issue with drains on the B3098 around the Paddock, BL had received responses saying that the Highways Engineer would be utilising drain clearing equipment to resolve the problems. However, whilst such vehicles have been seen operating in some locations within the Village, the drains near the Paddock are still blocked with silt. PW commented that the presence of silt does not necessarily mean that the drain is blocked in that location, more likely to be blocked further down the system which the engineers will address. TH agreed to send details of the log reports to PW for further investigation.

ACTION: FC/13/18 – TH

12. Peppercombe Development – TH reported that a number of concerns had been raised by local residents regarding mud on roads, large vehicles and road washing causing disruption and parking of contractor's vehicles in the locality. He had spoken to the Site Manager (Alan Worthington) who is trying desperately to minimise disturbance in difficult access circumstances. TH is visiting site on a weekly basis and also talking to local residents about their concerns. Current disruption is mainly due to work to connect mains water to the site. RH commented that residents have not been informed about expected road blockages, early warning would be helpful. GD pointed out that inconsiderate parking in the Village Hall is obstructing access and parking for the Community Bus. TH advised that the contractors are trying to complete ground works by the end of March including construction of a hard standing on site for vehicles, RT was of the view that planning conditions required initial provision of vehicle access and parking. It was noted that TH and DM are the UPC contacts in relation to this development.

13. Damage to Village verges – PW commented that vehicle damage to grass verges (and some pavements) in the Parish is noticeably increasing, this not only creates hazards for pedestrians but reduces / disfigures green spaces which are costly to repair. More fundamentally the damage is spoiling the appearance of the Village environment. PW suggested that UPC should write to all big vehicle users in the community on this; this suggestion was not agreed at this stage as it targets specific users when the problem is caused by a much wider group including private car owners. It was agreed that BL should put a strongly worded article in the March edition of Redhorn News to highlight the issue and seek more considerate behaviour by all road users.

ACTION: FC/14/18 – BL

(Post Meeting Note: Included article in March Edition article submitted 15th February 2018)

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

Mrs Nicky Hammond commented on the fact that verges in Uphill have been degraded by up to a metre mainly by vehicles associated with local building projects which have been going on for several years. Whilst she has asked drivers not to block roads or drive over verges, these requests have been largely ignored. She went on further to say that she wanted the Council to be aware that she had recently been visited by two police officers at 7pm on a Saturday night and basically warned off for causing malicious damage to a nearby property; she considered this to be an act of intimidation on the part of the owner of a nearby property who is himself a senior police officer. She is extremely angry and intends to take the matter further. DM expressed sympathy over this issue, TH advised that she should perhaps approach the Police Complaints Authority. PW had spoken with Mrs Hammond on this issue; resolution largely boils down to ownership of verges, if they belong to WC then he can involve the WC Enforcement Officer. PW will investigate further.

Chairman re-opened the Council Meeting

14. Welcome to Urchfont Leaflet – RH reported that he had produced a draft which he distributed to all councillors at the meeting and asked for their comments / suggestions by the end of next week; he will also approach organisations and groups mentioned in the leaflet for their comments in the same timeframe. He will then finalise the document including useful maps which may need copyright or licence payments. Decisions will then need to be taken on distribution / availability of the final document, including availability at the Parish meeting.

ACTION: FC/14/18 – ALL

15. 'Big Things' project – UPC had received a proposal from Banijay UK to involve Parish Councils in the production of a TV programme with a chance to win a large piece of locally inspired art by established artists. RT was of the view that such an attraction and publicity might bring a lot more visitors to the Parish, especially for the Scarecrow Weekend, which would be difficult to cope with. MK felt that such an initiative could have more negative than positive impacts.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
To take no action in respect of this invitation / proposal.	RT	LC	Unanimously agreed

16. Proposed Devizes Railway Station – DM commented that the article in the Gazette had been slightly misleading on the location of this proposed station which is slightly east of the Clock Inn Park. The Partnership Working Group has indicated a willingness to come and present at a future meeting and also to accept a UPC representative onto the Group. GD commented that whilst the success of this proposal is over-optimistic based on past experience, UPC should nevertheless be represented. PW commented that the status of this proposal has fundamentally changed; in the past the main problem was to get trains to stop and not the building of a platform. GWR have now expressed interest in view of the fact that they have ambitions to develop lines which would facilitate a stop at Lydeaway.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
That Graham Day be the UPC representative to liaise with the Working Group on this proposed railway station.	DM	GC	Unanimously agreed

17. CPRE Best Kept Village Competition 2018 – Urchfont was delighted to win the CPRE Best Newcomer Award in 2017 missing out by only one point on the Best Kept Village Award in its category, but more importantly it was generally accepted that the preparatory and voluntary hard work for that competition improved the general appearance and community spirit of the Village for the benefit of the whole Community. Much of the success must, however, be attributed to the co-ordinating and leadership role played by John Chapman, unfortunately he is no longer available to continue in this role.

DM reported that as agreed he had contacted most of these involved last year, most are willing to help but none are willing to take on this leading role. The Council needs to take a decision at the March meeting whether to go ahead with an application, but only if a Champion can be identified. Councillors were asked to try any identify and encourage potential candidates for this role.

ACTION: FC/15/18 – ALL

18. Christmas Lights – RT reported that, whilst retiring from the Council he is nevertheless prepared to assist with the lights but not be responsible for organising installation etc. The pond wall lights this year were

disappointing in that over 30 bulb failures occurred; the manufacturers have agreed to investigate whether they are actually suitable for outside installation as advertised. In addition we have received one complaint from a resident in relation to the brightness of the lights and the fact that they shine into her rooms at night; she would prefer that they are similar to the smaller lights on the tree. TH commented that maybe we should investigate alternative lights primarily because of the bulb failures and not because of one complaint. GD was of the view that lights on the wall are essential as an established part of Christmas in the Village, multi-coloured lights might be more acceptable as in the past. RT reported that Richard Harris has been asked to undertake the annual testing of the Pond Green electrical installations to ensure health and safety requirements for all users. On behalf of the Council, DM thanked Royston for all his hard work in relation to the electrical and Christmas installations.

19. Update on Current Parish Issues not covered by above agenda items

a. New Gateway Signs – DM noted that whilst the new signs had overwhelmingly received good comments from the community, the Council is aware of one definite and some rumoured negative views regarding lack of visibility when leaving Crooks Lane. The position of the signs had been agreed with WC Highways and installed by approved highways contractors; DM and others had tested this visibility issue and found no difficulty. However, to avoid potential future issues, DM asked that BL should check with WC Highways to confirm that the location of the signs does not present a hazard.

ACTION: FC/16/18 –BL

b. Condition of A342 outside Grist Recycling Site – DM commented on the poor state of the road outside this facility due to significant mud deposits made worse in wet / icy conditions and due to the operation of very slow road sweeping vehicles at peak times. At least two accidents have occurred recently on this stretch. PW confirmed that the position is due mainly to the building works on the Grist Environmental site as well as the nature of vehicles accessing the site. Warning signs are now on the A342 and WC are in regular contact with the owners of the site.

Proposal	Proposer	Seconder	Resolution
UPC to write to WC Planning Enforcement to register their road safety concerns along this stretch of the A342.	DM	GD	Unanimously agreed

ACTION: FC/17/18 - BL

c. Glass Milk Bottle trial by Urchfont Community Shop – GD reported on the good initiative of the Shop to trial milk in glass bottles rather than plastic.

Chairman closed the meeting for public participation

SJ agreed with the initiative but was disappointed that the price is higher than in plastic.

Chairman re-opened the Council meeting.

20. External Meetings – None reported.

21. Councillors’ Reports and Items for Future Agenda

a. Plan for Crookwood Lane Lay-By – BL confirmed that plans for this development had been received but after the issue of the agenda for this meeting. BL will circulate to all councillors and add to the March agenda. DM commented that the marking or otherwise of parking spaces could be an issue. PW will seek costings for this proposal having received any comments from UPC.

ACTION: FC/18/18 – BL

(Post Meeting Note: Plan circulated on 15th February 2018)

b. Urchfont School Governors Report – GC could not provide a written report by the due date as details had not been published to parents at that time. He then went on to cover a number of points which are now

attached as one of the written reports. Noting that attendance at the School is 50/50 local and from the wider catchment area, GD asked whether this prevented additional from the Village; GC responded that it did not. GD asked whether the issue of overhanging trees from Urchfont Manor had been resolved; GC confirmed it had not. Noting the intention to build a small extension to the School, RT asked what provision had been made for the Community Bus turning area during the works; as the governor responsible for buildings, GC confirmed that provision would be made.

Date of Next Meeting: 14th March 2018 in Urchfont Village Hall Conference Room commencing at 7.00pm

Meeting Closed at 9.58pm

Draft minutes prepared by Clerk to the Council 15th February 2018

A. CLERKS REPORT – FEBRUARY 2018

1. UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM FC MEETING ON 10th January 2018

FC/01/18 – Telephone Box – I am awaiting a response from BT.

FC/02/18 – Invasive Plants – I am awaiting a response.

FC/04/18 – Precept – the demand for £47244 was submitted to WC on 15th January 2018.

FC/05/18 – Allotment Hedges – decision to reduce the hedges to 5 feet communicated to contractor, work has now been completed.

FC/06/18 – Cemetery Business Rates – see item 4 below

FC/10/18 – Donation to Dauntsey's – a cheque for £50 has been issued as a thank you for the donation of their Christmas tree.

2. NEW GATEWAY SIGNS AND BOLLARDS – The four remaining bollards and the new Gateway Signs to the east of Crooks Lane were installed on 26th January 2018. Removal of the old signs has to be arranged.

3. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE AND LITTER COLLECTION ITT'S – Following publication on 20th January 2018, ITT's have been issued to six contractors; three have attended a site visit to date.

- ITT submission deadline – 1600hrs on Saturday 17th February 2018.
- Tenders will be opened – Monday 19th February 2018
- Evaluation completion and notification of contract award – Saturday 3rd March 2018
- Contract start date – Sunday 1st April 2018
- Contract Duration – 5 years

Evaluation of tenders will be undertaken by myself, the Chairman and Bill Donald.

4. CEMETERY BUSINESS RATES – following advice received, I made a claim to WC for Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) on the Cemetery backdated to 1st April 2012. This has now been granted resulting in a 100% refund of rates amounting to £916.92 (Cheque received on 2nd February). Furthermore I have been informed that the SBRR 100% relief will apply up until at least 2022 assuming no changes in rating policy. Based on the revised rateable value and charge (excluding transitional relief) applied for 2017/18, this will potentially save UPC around £2000 over at least the next four years. In the circumstances I have informed Goodman Nash that UPC does not want to take up their offer to pursue this issue.

5. IMPENDING COUNCILLOR VACANCY – Following the decision of Royston Thomas to retire from the Council immediately after the April meeting following almost 15 years' service, I will initiate action with Electoral Services to publish a vacancy notice in due course. Whether or not an election will be held or co-option approved will be dependent on whether more than 10 electors request an election by a deadline date stated on the notice.

6. MEMORIAL BENCH IN THE CEMETERY – This bench in memory of Mr Trimmell is in very poor condition generally; in particular several of the slats are broken or degraded. Item 5c on the agenda seeks to establish whether you want to repair the existing bench or replace it with new, whichever option is chosen there will be costs involved. A new wooden bench can be sourced for £400-£500.

7. GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR) – This new regulation applies from 25th May 2018 and supersedes the current Data Protection Act (DPA). Whilst a lot of this new regulation has similar requirements to the DPA, there are some significant additional requirements which we will have to comply with and necessitate amendment of existing / issue new UPC policies. I am currently researching these changes / seeking advice from appropriate agencies and intend to initially brief you more fully at the March meeting.

Bob Lunn

B. Councillor Reports

1. Scout Hut - Having chased De Jones re the development of the Scout Hut she informed me that she was no longer responsible for this project, apologised for not informing me and told me that Steve Tibbert (District Commissioner, Mid Wiltshire) had taken over. I have been in contact with him and we hope to meet up towards the end of February.

Bill Donald

2. PROW - Richard Broadhead reported back that he has been very busy recently with a number of other high priority matters at a time when they have been experiencing ongoing staff shortages. He regrets that he has not had the capacity within his workload to progress further discussions with the school and the UPC to finalise a proposed route for the alternative footpath to the claimed route. Equally, his Definitive Map officers have been required to spend their time preparing cases and presenting evidence at several public inquiries for other applications, three of which have been / are taking place this month. Once they get past the February half-term the diary should be a little less hectic, and have scheduled the submission of the order to the Secretary of State to be made then.

He then says he shall also look to arrange a meeting with the school, the UPC and the diocese after half-term.

He was pleased to hear about the provision made by the parish council to fund the proposed fencing.

Bill Donald

3. Drains and Gullies - Despite the promises made by Mr David Arnup, the 4 drain gullies along the B3098 from the junction of The Paddock to the junction with the High Street have still not been attended too and remain totally blocked. I can only assume that the Highways Technician does not consider that these blocked gullies are a road safety issue.

Ironically, I reported the flooding at the top of Peppercombe Lane and that gully was cleared on that same afternoon, Wednesday 24th January. I was reliably informed that the Gully Tanker had been seen in the village on that day.

Trevor Hill

4. Urchfont Village Cricket Club

- UVCC held its AGM on 26th January 2018. Although the club had to withdraw from the Wiltshire league due to insufficient players of the standard required to be competitive in Division 1, the Mid-Week and Sunday teams had a successful season.
- The club finances are in a reasonable state. This is helped by several successful and well supported social events.
- This year's fixture list includes 16 home weekend games, and 8 Mid-Week fixtures. More Mid-Week fixtures are still to be arranged, and during the season the Club will investigate entering a team in a Mid-Week league for the 2019 season.
- The Sunday morning junior coaching sessions continue to be very well supported, and these will continue in 2018.
- The Club very much appreciates the support it gets from members of the community including the Scarecrow Festival.

Dave Mottram

5. URCHFONT SCHOOL – GOVERNOR’S REPORT – 14/02/18

Staff – 15 total – Head teacher, Teachers - 3 F/T & 2 P/T, Teaching Assistants – 4, Office/Admin/Finance – 2, MDSA’s – 3.

Budget – Calculated using the National Funding Formula from 2020 onwards, in transitional phase at present.

Pupils on role – 110, in/out of catchment area 50/50 split.

SEN – Approx 25%

Emmanuel Collaboration – St. Barnabus, Easterton, Five Lanes, Potterne/Worton, Holy Trinity, Gt. Cheverall, St. Thomas Tilshead. No aspirations for Academy Status.

OFSTED – Last Inspection 23rd January 2018 – the Schools continues to be Good. One day inspection

Pirate Ship – construction almost complete.

Proposed Extension – small extension proposed to create 1 to 1 spaces for individual tuition, architect appointed, planning application to be submitted shortly.

Governors – 8 in total, all resident in the Parish, except one who is a former teacher at the School. The Head, Deputy Head & Rev’d Curtis also attend.

Graham Creasey